

Lies Of Our Times

DECEMBER 1994

A MAGAZINE TO CORRECT THE RECORD

\$3.50 (\$4.50 Canada)



Covering the Baseball Strike

**The Mexican Elections
Cuba and the Exiles**

**Endless Aid to Israel
Greenspan Scams**

**FINAL
ISSUE**

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Cover: No players, no spectators, no major-league baseball, summer 1994. (See page 11.) Credit: AP / Wide World Photos.

Thanks!

All of us here who have made it to the end—Ed Herman, Ellen Ray, Bill Schaap, Nancy Watt Rosenfeld, Ellen Davidson, Peter Rothberg, and Bill Preston—want to thank you, our readers, for your loyalty, your comments and criticisms and praise, and your support. We also want to thank our contributors, advisers, proofreaders, and interns for their devotion to the cause. Much of it has been thankless—till now—and the vast majority of it unpaid; this is only a function of the manic level at which we have operated.

We did, greatly, appreciate your help. We hope we will continue to cooperate in the future, in whatever ways we all can. The next few years will be tough ones here in the belly of the beast, and while we all are moving on, we are not dropping out.

Lies Of Our Times

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To Our Readers

Lies Of Our Times is a magazine of media criticism. "Our Times" are the times we live in but also the words of the *New York Times*, the most cited news medium in the U.S., our paper of record. Our "Lies" are more than literal falsehoods; they encompass subjects that have been ignored, hypocrisies, misleading emphases, and hidden premises—the biases which systematically shape reporting. We can address only a sampling of the universe of media lies and distortions. But we hope *LOOT* will go a long way toward correcting the record.

Editorial

In January 1990, with great enthusiasm and sense of mission, we published the first issue of *Lies Of Our Times*.

Today, five years later, it is with considerable sadness that we announce that this is our final issue. Never a very stable operation financially, we have at last succumbed to the economic pressures that, perpetually, it seems, face progressive publications in this country.

From the beginning, we were never able to operate at less than a significant deficit. Only the backing of one extremely generous supporter allowed us to meet much of our shortfall. Many other supporters and sustainers helped to make up the difference.

When, for reasons that do not detract from his impressive generosity over the years, our major supporter could no longer keep us afloat, we increased our efforts to develop sufficient sustainers to close this gap, while reaching out for new funding. Despite the contributions of dozens of people, we could not catch up, let alone build up the surplus needed to maintain regular direct mail subscription drives. Without continual efforts to expand its subscription base, no magazine can survive.

Ours was not a posh operation, as anyone who has visited our offices can attest, but cutting costs and personnel to the bare bones was not sufficient. Nevertheless, we were able to maintain what we believe was a consistently high quality to our publication.

We have much to appreciate as we look back over our brief lifetime. We are thankful for all our loyal subscribers, to our generous supporters, and to the sharp-eyed writers who have shadowed news reporting so vigorously.

The evil that *LOOT* was designed to confront, institutional bias in the major media, has certainly not abated in the past five years; it remains as powerful as ever, and will become more so as the media become increasingly concentrated in conglomerates of global scope.

With the November election sweeps, we can look forward to watching the establishment kowtow to Gingrich, Helms & Co., as they try to move Clinton to the "center." The burden upon our sister publications will grow even greater.

To Our Subscribers

As the inevitability of discontinuing *LOOT* arrived, we stopped accepting payment for new subscriptions and renewals. We also began turning our efforts to fulfilling our obligation to current subscribers. We know that many of you, in trying to help, have extended your subscriptions and purchased gift subscriptions for friends. We have

made arrangements for our colleagues at *CovertAction Quarterly* to take over our unfulfilled subscriptions. *CAQ* will pro-rate the number of issues you will receive to conform to its quarterly schedule. Look for an announcement explaining details in your first copy of *CAQ*.

If you already subscribe to *CovertAction* your subscription will be extended. We hope that those of you who do not yet know this magazine—which has been around for 16 years now—will be pleasantly surprised by its coverage and quality.

Many of us who have written for *LOOT* over the years will be contributing to *CovertAction*. We expect that *CAQ* will contain some pages of the kind of media analysis you have come to expect from *LOOT*, from the people on whose analysis you have relied.

Keeping IMA Alive and Fighting

Since its creation in 1986, the Institute for Media Analysis, Inc., which has produced each issue of *LOOT*, has also published monographs, conducted seminars and conferences, provided speakers and experts, and made available to researchers its resources and library.

To a great extent, keeping the Institute going will depend upon our ability to receive contributions and grants in the modest amounts that will enable us to keep a small office, to distribute our publications, to publish further monographs or books, and, who knows, perhaps to host another conference, maybe on Life in the Age of Newt.

We will still need to solicit help from our friends. We will still need to urge everyone to purchase our publications. (The complete collection of *LOOT* is available in single copies and in library-bound annual volumes. Consider this for the historians on your gift list.) The next month or two will be the most difficult, as we attempt to pay off our existing debts.

It is less than satisfying to have to explain that we are still in need, even as we present this obituary of *LOOT*. But, it is the reality. We have used most of our liquid assets and called upon the generosity of friends to get this last issue to everyone in our desire to go out with dignity.

We apologize to all of you who have called over the past weeks wondering what had happened to your subscription. This time it wasn't the Post Office's fault. Or even the CIA's. We deeply appreciate your support and encouragement over the years. We know we will keep in touch through the work we all will continue to do.

— The Staff of *Lies Of Our Times*



Thousands rally in Mexico City, August 22, 1994, to protest the results of the national elections.

Mexican Elections

Jamie McClelland

Continuing a 65-year-old tradition, Mexico's Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) once again claimed victory in the August 21 presidential election. Also following tradition, the *New York Times* provided little relevant analysis of the political process in Mexico, not to mention Washington's cozy relationship with the PRI. As in the case of other countries friendly to U.S. corporations, the *Times* stuck to the "generally-accurate-despite-isolated-irregularities" rap to describe the vote count. Conveniently left out were the gross inequalities inherent in the Mexican electoral system, as well as the financial and political support the U.S. extended to the PRI-run government prior to the vote.

In an editorial two months before the elections, the *Times* laid out its criteria for judging the elections:

Democrats have reason to be extremely uncomfortable with this year's political violence. Armed guerrillas and political assassins represent the opposite of free popular choice. The best answers to such self-appointed political saviors are genuine pluralism and clean elections. By

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holding a free and fair presidential election on Aug. 21, Mexicans can redeem a troubled year ("Mexico Faces Reality," June 20).

Instead of examining the factors underlying Mexico's violent political climate, the *Times* emphasized the limited electoral reforms immediately preceding the vote and the level of fraud on election day. This superficial approach conveniently allowed for the declaration that the election "irregularities" were not extensive enough to influence the outcome of the vote.

Climate of Fear

Regardless of whether all the ballots were counted properly, however, the number of human rights abuses and murders and the level of harassment leading up to the vote cast serious doubt about whether *conditions* for fair elections existed. The Revolutionary Democratic Party (PRD), for example, claimed that 246 of its members had been murdered since the previous presidential election in 1988. On July 11, a PRD volunteer was arrested, interrogated, and tortured for distributing flyers and collecting donations for the PRD (*Mexico at the Crossroads*, Human Rights Watch/Americas, August 1994, p. 20). Within a five-day period in late July, less than a month before the election, four

PRD members were killed in two separate suspicious hit-and-run accidents (*Washington Report on the Americas*, August 8, 1994, p. 8).

In addition to attacks on the PRD, election monitors were harassed by the government; a prominent human rights activist was threatened with death; and the headquarters of the Society of Jesus in Mexico received bomb threats, which Jesuit sources attribute to the order's critical stance toward the government (*Mexico at the Crossroads*, p. 21). According to Reporteurs Sans Frontières, a Paris-based press rights group, three reporters died under suspicious circumstances during the three months prior to the elections ("Salinas fails to create a respectable criminal justice system or guarantee clean vote," Council on Hemispheric Affairs, press release, August 12, p. 4).

Such abuses, however, pale in comparison to military actions immediately following the January uprising in Chiapas. There is mounting evidence that the army conducted summary executions of people suspected of being members of the Zapatista National Liberation Army. The National Human Rights Commission received 400 reports of disappearances less than four weeks into the uprising. Many of these disappearances were the result of massive army sweeps through villages and arbitrary arrests. The army has also been accused of firing indiscriminately at civilians, threatening villagers with execution, ransacking storage houses, and killing livestock (*Current History*, March 1994, pp. 121-22).

While downplaying this climate of fear, the *Times* quoted an "expert" on Latin America who maintained that Mexicans "are reluctant to change; they are afraid of change." Coverage failed to explain why Mexicans were afraid, as if fear were some national predisposition rather than a result of government-supported terror (Tim Golden, "To Change or Not to Change? That is the Question," August 21, p. A16).

Using the Power of Office

Intimidation was not the only factor adversely affecting the fairness of the elections. As the sole ruling party for 65 years, the PRI had a significant edge over the opposition. From the party's hold on the labor unions to its domination of the Federal Electoral Institute (despite reforms enacted to make the body more independent), the PRI's sway gives new meaning to the term "incumbent's advantage."

Then there is the PRI's program of economic "modernization." This policy—which has favored large corporate and agricultural interests through government subsidies—along with the sale of hundreds of state-owned companies, has won over the Mexican oligarchy. This support, in turn, has translated into hefty campaign donations. In the flurry of election coverage in the *Times*, only an August 17 article focused on Mexican big business, acknowledging that corporate contributions to the PRI threatened "to flatten the opposition" (Golden, "Big Business Puts Money on Mexican Status Quo," p. A3). According to John Ross, writing in *The Nation*, official figures indicate that the PRI spent \$42 million compared to the PRD's \$2 million (unofficially the PRI may have spent five to ten times more). This level of corporate backing allowed the PRI to plaster Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de León's name on every rock and wall in the country and to virtually monopolize media coverage of the election ("After Elections, Apocalypse?" August 8-15, p. 157).

Campaign reforms allowing for equal access to the media did little to loosen the PRI's hold on the media. The PRI dominated television news and received more newspaper coverage than the two main opposition parties combined: The PRI's Zedillo received three times more coverage than Diego Fernández de Cevallos of the National Action Party (PAN) and six times more coverage than the PRD's Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas (*Mexico at the Crossroads*, pp. 18-19).

New York Times coverage also favored the PRI. In "Torn by Change, Mexican Party Fights On," Golden described the "hulking machine known as the PRI" in its heroic efforts to patch itself together and move forward (August 12, p. A1). Although a steamroller comes more readily to mind, Golden chose to compare the party to a floating log, explaining that many older PRI leaders were barely holding on. "[T]he mere prospect that the PRI could win a plurality of the vote," he added, "is testament to the extraordinary ability of the world's longest-ruling political party," as if a victory by the PRI were ever in doubt. While acknowledging at one point that the PRI's resistance to fundamental change "augurs darkly for the country's transition to full democracy," Golden closed his piece by quoting a former PRI mayor, who stressed, "We must try to keep what we have." Conveying the image that the PRI, while maybe a little authoritarian, is still worth rooting for, Golden severely downplayed the PRI's advantage, as if it were barely keeping up with the other parties in a tight race.

The *Times* also emphasized the "limited but significant reforms" of the Salinas administration ("Mexico Faces Reality"). One piece, which carried Tim Golden's byline but could have been written by the PRI, even compared Salinas to Mikhail Gorbachev. According to Golden, while Salinas had previously held back on democratic reforms in order to carry out "sweeping economic changes," he was "now embracing the country's demands for political reform." Furthermore, rather than acknowledging that the Zapatista uprising was a result of the injustice of these "sweeping economic changes," Golden attributed the rebellion to a "curse" that has befallen Mexico's last four presidents ("In Last Minute Rites, Salinas Weds Democracy," August 15, p. A3).

Post-Election Positive

Following the elections, the *Times* continued its two-dimensional reporting. On August 22 the headline ran: "Mexicans Cast Votes in Large Numbers, Few Irregularities Seen in Election Focused on Democratic Reforms" (p. A6). Echoing the editorial two months earlier, Golden focused on the voting alone, as if lack of widespread irregularities could make up for the fact that the PRI had dominated, through violence and superior resources, the entire campaign. When protests concerning the vote were mentioned at all, they were offset by positive developments. For example, the acknowledgment that violence had broken out in half a dozen cities in response to a shortage of ballots was quickly followed by a reassuring quote from President Salinas that "the early balloting had taken place in 'complete tranquility.'" A photo published the following day showed Mexicans (who apparently had not read the *Times*'s conclusion about the elections) burning their voter registration cards to protest the fraud. The caption, ignoring Cárdenas's call for a rally the following Satur-

day, read: "Although the lack of ballots prevented thousands from voting, disturbances were rare and there was no call for resistance or widespread protest from any political faction" (Anthony DePalma, "Ruling Party's Candidate Wins Presidency," August 23, p. A1).

The Missing U.S. Factor

Perhaps the *Times's* greatest oversight was its discussion of U.S. involvement. In the only piece dedicated to the subject, Golden claimed that the "role of the United States in Mexican politics has at the very least been extremely discreet" ("In Mexico U.S. Hones Art of Laissez-Faire Diplomacy," August 14, p. E1). As Golden explained it, this discretion was due to "the many signs that Mexico may indeed be finding its way [to a more democratic system]," Clinton's preoccupation with Haiti, and the United States' inability to influence Mexico. Considering the huge amount of U.S. economic aid flowing to Mexico, this picture of restraint stretches credulity.

Only toward the end of his article did Golden touch on reality. He cited anonymous critics who suggested that the Clinton administration might be favoring stability over democracy in Mexico. And, "American officials protest that [U.S. ambassador to Mexico] Mr. Jones vigorously pressed President Carlos Salinas de Gortari and his aides to put aside the idea of a military solution to the peasant rebellion...." This was the first indication that the U.S. has not been so silent about Mexico. Golden continued: "Citing another important, albeit benign, intervention, they note that within 24 hours after the assassination of the governing party's presidential candidate [Luís Donaldo Colosio] on March 23, the Clinton Administration also opened a \$6-billion line of credit to Mexico to block a run on the peso."

It is interesting that this last bit of information made it past the Business Section where it was initially reported a few days after Colosio's assassination (DePalma, "Help for Peso Rooted in Trade Debate," March 29, p. D1). DePalma noted that the line of credit was first extended during debate over the North American Free Trade Agreement, to ensure stability in Mexico if Congress defeated the bill, and was re-extended after Colosio's assassination. A month later Thomas Friedman, also reporting in the Business Section, explained that the U.S., Canada, and Mexico had agreed to "an unusual multi-billion-dollar fund to stabilize Mexico's currency and protect it from further onslaughts by global speculators" ("Fund Is Set up to Stabilize Peso," April 27, p. D1). The *Times* did not follow up on why it is in the U.S. interest to stabilize the peso, and how it might affect the enormous profits made by U.S. corporations operating and trading in Mexico.

While there is certainly evidence that electoral fraud is decreasing in Mexico and other Latin American countries, there is also evidence that the intervention of economic interests, often originating in the United States, significantly reduced prospects for truly fair elections. The *Times's* emphasis on the former has obscured the latter. As with most elections south of the border, "Latin America's gathering wave of democratic change," which the *Times* insisted was reaching Mexico in 1988 ("Mexico's Radical Insider," July 3, 1988, editorial), has proven to be a more popular topic than the question of whose interests are being served and how those interests determine election results. •

Labor Aggression In Mexico

Edward S. Herman

It may be recalled that when organized labor had the audacity to lobby against NAFTA, the *New York Times* (and the *Washington Post*) editorialized with indignation against such strongarm tactics, actually listing labor contributions to various members of Congress to demonstrate the extent of this special interest involvement ("Running Scared from Nafta," November 16, 1993). Labor was stepping out of line, was the clear implication; only big business, the administration, and the Mexican government had a right to lobby and apply pressure in the political arena.

The *New York Times* performed in similar fashion when several U.S. labor unions brought an action in February 1994 under the NAFTA side agreement that deals with allegations of labor abuse. The unions filed charges against General Electric and Honeywell for firing Mexican workers who were trying to organize a union. Whereas the *Financial Times* covered the union complaints in an August 5 article entitled "US unions bring first charges under Nafta" (Nancy Dunne, p. 4), it was only in mid-September, just prior to the hearings on these charges in Washington, that the *New York Times* got around to mentioning the subject, in an article in the Business Section entitled "Big Labor's Strategic Raid in Mexico" (Allen Meyerson, September 12, p. D1).

Financial Times Frame: The Union Charges

The titles make clear how differently the two articles approached and framed the issues. The *Financial Times* opened by explaining that the hearings were to be held under the NAFTA side agreement on alleged labor abuses, and that the complaints charged GE and Honeywell with "attempts to obstruct the organization of unions independent of Mexico's government party." The London paper reported that the unions view the case as a test of the Clinton administration's resolve to deal with labor abuses in Mexico, the *Financial Times* itself pointing out Clinton's "vocal" advocacy of tying workers' rights (and environmental protection) to trade liberalization.

The *Financial Times* gave details on Honeywell's sacking of 21 workers "just days after Congress ratified Nafta." The paper noted that Honeywell paid minimum Mexican wages and reported the union charge that Honeywell was a member of an employers' association that spies on workers, interrogates them behind closed doors, and fires them to keep out independent unions.

The *Financial Times* pointed out that Honeywell did not deny the charges, but argued that the NAFTA provisions did not apply: NAFTA requires hearings only on "a pattern of non-enforcement by Mexico of Mexican labor law." The *Financial Times* also gave space to union complaints about how the Clinton admini-

stration had handled the proceedings, scheduling the hearings in Washington, D.C., far from Mexican workers, and in August, "when members of Congress are vacationing along with many representatives of the media," thus giving the appearance of being "intentionally designed to be as ineffective as possible." (Hearings were subsequently postponed to September).

New York Times Frame: Union Aggression

In dramatic contrast with the *Financial Times*, the *New York Times* did not frame its article around the union charges, or claims that the side agreements would really protect labor, or labor conditions in Mexico. Instead, it featured the complaints as a strategic power play by unions which, having lost the presumably democratic and fair game of NAFTA in Congress, "are trying for a comeback by organizing Mexican plants" and are "succeeding in making Washington a forum for complaints about Mexican labor practices." Both the title and the opening several paragraphs of the article framed the subject as "big labor," the aggressor and bad loser, using some kind of inappropriate forum to enlarge its power instead of gracefully accepting the NAFTA defeat.

Reinforcing its negative portrayal of union organizing efforts in Mexico, the *New York Times* generously quoted an official of the "dominant" Mexican union, who claimed that these outsiders "are mistaken when they say the Mexican unions need their help," and that there are "no problems other than what they create."

References to "secretive efforts under way" for long-term victory and to the "stealth" of the union recruiting tactics suggested a sinister quality of outsider intervention:

These organizing efforts [at GE] are only the most visible aspect of what other unions are doing with greater stealth. A.F.L.-C.I.O. affiliates, including the Clothing and Textile Workers, are hoping to quietly recruit enough supporters for allied Mexican unions so that by the time plant managers can respond or retaliate, a union will already be entrenched.

Structuring the article around charges against the U.S. unions comes naturally to the *New York Times*, paralleling its view of the relative rights of unions and corporations to lobby for and against NAFTA. The *New York Times* never portrayed the moves of GE and Honeywell (*et al.*) into Mexico as power plays damaging to U.S. workers or unions; it took the corporate moves as part of business's natural right to seek gain. By contrast, workers' resistance, even though exercising a right to union organization proclaimed as a nominal objective by Clinton and other NAFTA defenders, can be questioned. Thus, the *New York Times* portrayed the unions, not as engaged in legitimate defense, but as aggressive invaders of Mexico, taking advantage of poor GE and Honeywell! The *New York Times* also cited the complaints of Mexican officials and U.S. business groups that the labor panel has gone too far, "turning the side agreement into a broad license to examine corporate conduct." The paper allowed this ludicrous claim to stand uncontested, although the only evidence of this "broad license" is this action filed in February with its specific and detailed charges against GE and Honeywell.

AP / Wide World Photos



PRD supporter wearing Salinas mask holds rat with PRI logo.

Just a Matter of Emphasis

The *New York Times* did not entirely ignore the allegations that GE and Honeywell had fired workers and carried out other acts of intimidation to prevent unionization. Nor did it give zero attention to the salient context of long-time police intimidation of independent unionization efforts in Mexico, the anti-labor role of the government-controlled union, and the earlier *New York Times*-supported assertions that NAFTA and the side agreement would help Mexican workers. It merely placed them in the distant background as contested claims. Thus, in reporting the union charges, the *New York Times* gave GE and Honeywell more than generous space to respond, with no counter-replies, leaving the issue a standoff. As noted, it quoted at some length an official of the government-sponsored union, which was repeatedly referred to as the "largest" and "dominant" Mexican union, while failing to provide an independent assessment of its role as a government- and PRI-related institution. The weakness of the side agreement was barely hinted at by the *New York Times*, and the union charges regarding the mishandling of the complaint in the hearings arrangements were unmentioned.

On Mexican workers' attitudes toward the unionization effort, the *New York Times* reporter stated: "A quick sampling of worker sentiments turned up lukewarm but timid backing. 'The union is fighting a good fight,' one worker said through the fence, but added that a manager had just warned that with a union victory the company might close the plant." There is no internal evidence that the "quick sampling" extended beyond the single worker quoted. In the context of a repressive environment, warnings and firings for union sympathizers, and questions from a North American reporter, this worker's expression of "timid" support for the union probably took considerable courage. •



Cuban refugees are held at Guantánamo Bay Naval Base, August 1994.

Fussed by Fidel

John L. Hess

The *New York Times* likes to steer down the middle, but sometimes it's hard to *find* the middle. Consider Bill Clinton's squeeze on Cuba. As Jorge Más Canosa, chief of the ultras in Miami, told the *Times*, even Ronald Reagan and George Bush "never took a stand against Castro the way Mr. Clinton has" (Jon Nordheimer, "Cuban Group Forges Link to Clinton," August 26, p. A12). Even the *Wall Street Journal* thought Clinton ought to let up ("Lift the Embargo," August 26, editorial).

That should have been reassuring for Howell Raines, the new chief of the *Times*'s editorial page. Raines has been taking flak from the right for moving its tone toward the center and taking the occasional swipe at Clinton and New York City's Republican Mayor Rudolph Giuliani. (The previous editor, Jack Rosenthal, moved over to the *Sunday Magazine*, which swung distinctly to the right.) So that editorial in the *Wall Street Journal* gave timely support to the *Times* editorial of August 24, "Why Punish the Cuban People?"

A good question. But its decency was weakened by a perceived need to blame Fidel Castro for Bill Clinton's confusion ("Even in decline, Mr. Castro has shown his uncanny power to get Washington to tie itself into knots") and by charging that, once again, "the U.S. is overreacting to his provocations."

John L. Hess, a former *New York Times* reporter, writes for a variety of publications.

What provocations? The *Times* didn't say. Clinton had implied that Castro was trying to push us around by allowing Cubans to depart. It was weeks into the crisis before the *Times* recalled that Reagan had agreed to admit up to 20,000 Cubans a year and that Bush had raised that to nearly 28,000, but the State Department was issuing fewer than one-tenth that many visas. The *Times* did not emphasize the tightening of the embargo by Clinton, or examine the content of U.S. broadcasting to Cuba, or linger on the irony of denying Cubans legal entry while encouraging them to come by raft.

Whining at the *Times*

More surprising, however, was a wrapup of U.S. relations with Cuba that led the "Week in Review" on August 28 (p. E1). Supporting Clinton's view of the U.S. as victim, the headline whined, "Castro, the Man with Few Cards, Always Winds Up the Dealer." The *Times*'s man in Miami, Larry Rohter, wrote:

In fact, though Mr. Castro likes to portray American policy toward his revolution as one of unrelenting hostility, the record indicates otherwise. All nine presidents since the days of Eisenhower have sought to take the approach recommended by then Vice President Richard Nixon as he emerged from his Washington office with his arm around the Cuban leader after they met there in April 1959: "We're going to work with this man."

Breathtaking. Even a casual reader should be aware that the nine presidents maintained an unrelenting hostility toward Cuba, often in defiance of world opinion. As for that first year, 1959, the record disputes Nixon's promise. Ronald Fernandez checked the minutes of the National Security Council at the Eisenhower Library for his new book, *Cruising the Caribbean: U.S. Influence and Intervention in the Twentieth Century* (Monroe, Me.: Common Courage Press [see Politeracy, p. 17]). He quotes Assistant Secretary of State Roy Rubottom as saying that the "honeymoon period" for Castro had ended by March 1959, that by June "we had reached the decision that it was not possible to achieve our objectives with Castro in power," and that in the following two months we "had been busy drawing up a program to replace Castro" (p. 297).

Eisenhower Set the Tone

Files of the *New York Times* itself tell much of the story, usually belatedly, often echoing official propaganda, with long patches of darkness and occasional flashes of light. Early on, Castro nationalized some U.S. properties; Eisenhower then canceled Cuba's sugar quota, beginning an economic war that continues to this day. He also began the secret dirty war of overflights, bombings, sabotage, assassination attempts, commando raids, and hijackings, which went well into the Johnson administration and has sputtered a few times since.

For his part, Castro turned to the Soviet Union for aid, let it put missiles in Cuba, and sided with it in disputes in the Third World, notably in Angola, where Cubans fought for an internationally recognized government against contras and South Africans backed by the CIA. The notion that one side of the Cold War in that world defended democracy and the other upheld tyranny does not bear scrutiny.

Tensions between Havana and Washington rose and fell over the years, but no U.S. president has ever offered to embrace Castro, or even simply let him be, even after the collapse of the Soviet bloc and the end of the Cold War. If Castro was dealing the cards, as the *Times* put it, Washington never played the game. •

Más Hypocrisy

Eyal Press

Just days after the Clinton administration announced a ban on family remittances and an increase in radio and TV broadcasts to Cuba, the *New York Times* served up a tendentious profile of Jorge Más Canosa, the millionaire chairman of the zealously anti-Castro Cuban American National Foundation (CANF), who also happens to be in control of the very companies (Radio and TV Martí) that will broadcast the anti-Castro propaganda announced by Clinton (Jan Nordheimer, "Cuban Group Forges Link to Clinton," August 26, p. A12).

Eyal Press, a journalist based in New York City, has written for *The Nation* and the *Christian Science Monitor*.

Nordheimer gave Más Canosa free rein to proclaim that President Bill Clinton was a man of "democracy and freedom" (evidently for letting Más Canosa dictate his Cuba policy), and that Fidel Castro got what he deserves for "promoting ... violence on the Cuban people."

Granting Más Canosa a platform for his sanctimonious pronouncements on democracy and violence without even a hint of skepticism is of course a perfect prelude to presenting him as Castro's future successor. (This is known to be Más Canosa's ultimate ambition, and in a recent money-raising gambit he collected \$25,000 from various business leaders who want to be first on board "after the fall of Castro.") Yet Más Canosa's self-serving hypocrisy on matters of democracy, freedom, and violence—"I am pro-violence," he has said on other occasions—is no secret to anyone even vaguely familiar with his career.

On violence, Más Canosa is in fact better suited to speak as practitioner than judge. After fleeing to Miami in 1960, Más Canosa joined the Bay of Pigs invasion force and subsequently trained at Fort Benning, Georgia, with close friends and CIA agents Felix Rodriguez and Luís Posada. Afterwards, he joined the CIA-backed Representación Cubana en el Exilio, where he was in charge of anti-Castro propaganda and where his activities, according to an FBI memo, included delivering \$5,000 to Posada to cover his colleague's expenses for a mission to blow up a Cuban or Soviet ship in Mexico's Veracruz harbor. Prior to pontificating on democracy and freedom, Más Canosa boasted that he "ran commando operations" against Cuba until 1968.

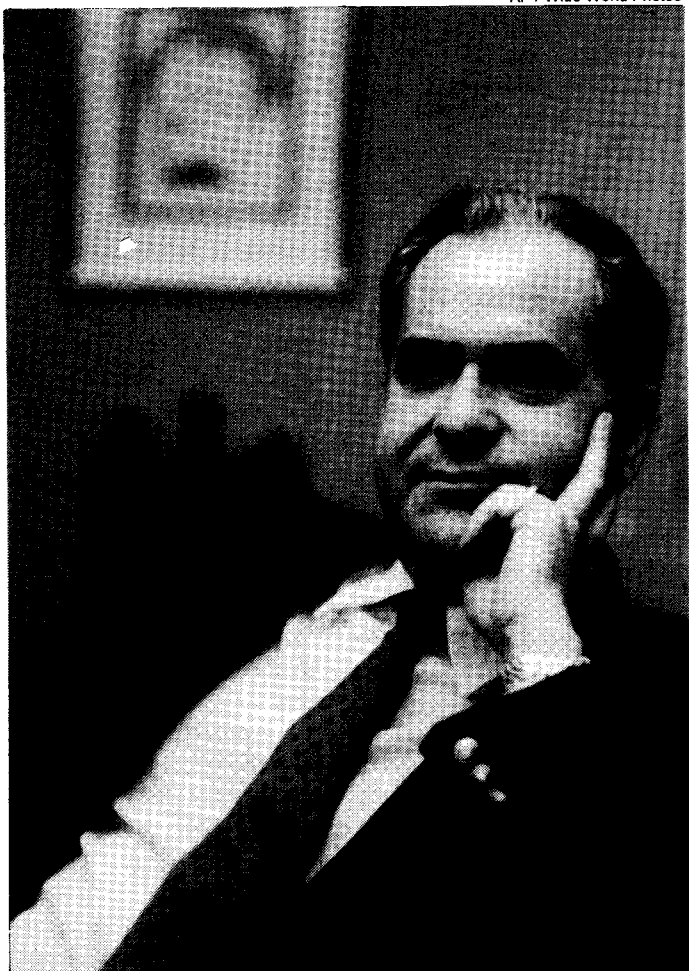
Comrades in Arms

Más Canosa also nurtures friends like Cuban-American insurrectionist Orlando Bosch, whom the FBI has tied to more than 90 acts of terrorism, including the October 1976 bombing of a Cubana Airlines plane which killed all 73 passengers on board. Más Canosa refers to Bosch as a "patriot," not as a killer who "promotes violence." According to Gaeton Fonzi, the Miami-based author of an outstanding January 1993 article on Más Canosa for *Esquire* magazine, the CANF leader pulled out all the stops to get Bosch released from a Miami prison in July 1990, applying pressure on his compatriot's behalf on Florida Congresspersons Connie Mack and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen and on Jeb Bush (whose father, George Bush, was then President, subsequently ordered Bosch's release) ("Who Is Más Canosa?" p. 86).

Más Canosa was far less discreet in lending his assistance to Ignacio and Guillermo Novo, two brothers implicated in the September 1976 murder of former Chilean Ambassador Orlando Letelier and Institute for Policy Studies associate Ronnie Moffitt (the Novo brothers were also involved in drug trafficking orchestrated by the Chilean secret police, DINA). Más Canosa appointed the Novo brothers to CANF and paid some of the tab for their defense.

Background Check

How much digging would it require for a *Times* reporter to uncover such unseemly facts? A look through office files would more than suffice, since on November 27, 1990, the paper itself reviewed the details of the Letelier/Moffitt murder, mentioning that while Más Canosa condemned the car bombing, "his words would ring truer if his foundation refused to associate with exiles



Jorge Más Canosa.

implicated in an outrageous act of terror on a Washington street" ("The Ghost of Letelier," editorial). Now that Más Canosa has Clinton's ear on Cuba policy, his words on democracy are ringing truer than ever in *Timesprint*.

Though this was not included in Más Canosa's profile, he can legitimately boast of assisting in the attempted undermining of more than one Latin American government. According to CANF founding director Raul Másvidal, in the 1980s "the Foundation became very much involved in the Contra effort ... Más Canosa developed the theme, 'the road to Havana goes through Managua' " (Fonzi). Más Canosa took frequent trips to the Ilopango Air Base in El Salvador, the infamous contra arms and narcotics trans-shipment point.

Más Canosa was also tied to the contras through his close friendship with Posada and Rodriguez (who boasts of having eliminated Ché Guevara and whom Más Canosa calls "a great patriot, a professional soldier"). Fonzi reports that Oliver North's notebook contains various references to Más Canosa, including an April 1985 entry that reads: "Mtg. w/Jorge Más Canosa.... Jorge Project: Monge, Duarte, Suazo... [Alberto Monge, José Napoleón Duarte, Roberto Suazo, then presidents of Costa Rica, El Salvador, and Honduras, respectively]." North's notebooks included five different telephone numbers for Más Canosa.

In the 1980s, Más Canosa also played a personal role in getting U.S. funds flowing to Angola's Jonas Savimbi, the UNITA

leader whose refusal to accept an electoral defeat in the 1992 elections has left some 300,000 more Angolans dead.

Support in All the Right Places

Más Canosa's involvement in undermining Castro and supporting the contras is not surprising, given that since 1981 CANF has received roughly \$200 million from the U.S. Congress for often illicit anti-Cuba projects, including National Endowment for Democracy grants for CANF front groups. What is extraordinary is that Más Canosa and CANF have managed to bully and intimidate opponents even on U.S. soil without receiving so much as a slap on the wrist or tarnishing the group's credibility with the media. In January 1992 Más Canosa appeared on a local radio broadcast and accused the *Miami Herald* of being "tools of the Castro regime" after its publisher, David Lawrence, Jr., wrote a series of articles against the so-called Cuban Democracy (Torricelli) Act. Death and bomb threats followed against *Herald* executives, while newspaper kiosks were smeared with feces, and CANF advertisements appeared on Dade County buses saying, "I don't believe the *Herald*" (Anne-Marie O'Connor, "Trying to Set the Agenda in Miami," *Columbia Journalism Review*, May/June 1992, p. 42). While Más Canosa denies responsibility for the violence that followed his inflammatory accusations, Americas Watch and the Fund for Free Expression issued a report that criticized the U.S. government for its "encouragement, primarily through funding, of groups that have been closely identified with efforts to restrict freedom of expression" ("Dangerous Dialogue: Freedom of Expression and Miami's Cuban Exiles," August 1992). Its "principal example" was money granted to groups such as CANF (see Jane Franklin, *The Progressive*, July 1993, p. 18).

Minority Spokesman

While the *New York Times* portrayed Más Canosa as a leading-spokesman for the Cuban-American community, it neglected to mention that his views on negotiating with Cuba are simply not shared by the majority of Cuban Americans. The *Times* made no mention of the results of a poll *The Economist* published in July 1994, which found that four out of five Cuban Americans in Dade County favor "negotiations with the Cuban government to facilitate peaceful change" ("Dealing With Numero Uno," July 16)—the very position that inspired Más Canosa to excoriate the *Miami Herald*.

Nor did the *Times* mention that while Más Canosa virulently opposes allowing U.S. companies to invest in Communist Cuba, his own company, Church & Tower, has reportedly initialed letters of intent to take control of a conglomerate and invest \$100 million in the People's Republic of China. Más Canosa has since scrapped the plans, which outside of the *Times*'s pages had begun to earn him charges of hypocrisy.

"This guy," says an ex-State Department diplomat who worked in Havana and has seen Más Canosa operate at close range, "has assimilated the American political system better than anyone else.... He knows whom to intimidate, who to buy and how to make it work.... I don't think he understands democracy...." (Fonzi). That does not seem to have deterred the nation's most powerful newspaper from granting him generous opportunities to pass judgment on freedom and democracy. •



Acting Baseball Commissioner Bud Selig, left, testifies before House committee, as players' rep Don Fehr waits his turn.

Pa-a-ay Ball!!!

Mike Zielinski

To follow baseball's labor showdown in the press you need a program to identify the players. Lifelong advocates for big business have become born-again trade unionists, while columnists for weeklies like the *Village Voice* bash the players who produce all of baseball's wealth.

If politics makes for strange bedfellows, then adding sports to the mix leads to truly bizarre encounters. In baseball's battle between players and owners, George Will, *Business Week*, and the *Wall Street Journal* are all siding with labor. As these opinion-makers stumble through the words to "Solidarity Forever," sportswriters for liberal dailies like the *Boston Globe* disparage the players' cause.

What gives? New York Yankees owner George Steinbrenner is not about to defect to Cuba, alas. In this case, however, it is the employees who are demanding the free use of a market economy, while the bosses are screaming for price controls in the form of a salary cap. Thomas Boswell of the *Washington Post*, one of the nation's most esteemed sportswriters, stretches his poetic license to ask: "Who'd have dreamed that almost the last place on earth where people believed passionately in socialism would be the corporate board rooms of pro sports teams?" ("Owners' Manifesto: Gluttons of the World Unite," September 30, 1994, p. C1).

Mike Zielinski, former political director for the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES), is writing a book on baseball's labor history.

Most press coverage of baseball's labor troubles has keyed on a single point: that this is a tug-of-war between spoiled millionaire players and arrogant millionaire owners in which the fans lose. The conventional wisdom, though, ignores the fact that the owners are engaged in the true national pastime of American business: union busting.

In an age when replacement workers, contract employees, and givebacks define labor relations, baseball players have established what is arguably the nation's most successful union. Seven times in the last 20 years they have gone to the mat with management and each time they've emerged as winners.

Of course it would be foolish to cast the players as working-class heroes. Major league ballplayers receive a minimum wage of \$109,000 a year for what is, essentially, seasonal work. Their union has shown no willingness to try to organize the minor leagues, baseball's underclass, where salaries can dip to less than \$1,000 per month. Nor has it used its high visibility to promote universal health care or other issues of concern to the broader labor movement.

The Truth About Salaries

Still, press characterizations of the players as millionaires misrepresent the arithmetic behind most big league salaries. Virtually every story about the strike cites ballplayers' average salary as \$1.2 million, a fact guaranteed to undercut any public sympathy.

thy for their cause. This average salary figure is a classic case of lies, damn lies, and statistics.

A truer measure of the players' economic worth is the median salary (half make less, half more), which is \$410,000. A handful of top stars soak up most of the revenue allotted to players. Furthermore, the vast majority of professional baseball players dwell in the minor leagues, a low-paid apprenticeship which can constitute as much as ten years of a player's working life. Most players enjoy brief major league careers of five years or less.

Few of these facts have emerged in press accounts of the strike. The most commonly held media viewpoint is that constant of mainstream journalism—a plague on both their houses. By failing to examine the merits of competing claims, the media reinforce the notion that there's a virtuous center under siege from the extremes, a view that inevitably favors the status quo. Polls show the public assigning more blame for the loss of baseball to the players than to the owners. Press coverage that equates the two sides and frequently describes players' salaries, while rarely referring to owners' profits, wealth, or objectives, helps fuel fans' resentment of players' salaries.

Squeeze Play

Regardless of press attitudes, though, the players have several strikes against them in the contest for public opinion. As fewer and fewer workers earn a living wage, baseball's minimum annual salary is set at \$109,000. Clearly, striking baseball players are not in the same league as Hormel workers. At the same time, the conflict animating baseball's work stoppage is similar to other labor disputes: Management is attempting to break the union and force salaries downward. The owners deliberately provoked the strike with these objectives in mind.

Faced with the prospect of owners declaring an impasse in negotiations and unilaterally imposing a salary cap, players had no recourse but to walk off the job. Team owners, incapable of agreeing to share revenue among themselves, are intent on redistributing the players' share of the profits.

In effect, a salary cap would create a two-tier wage system within baseball. Superstar players would continue to reap huge rewards. Veteran players with respectable but less than stellar abilities would gradually be squeezed out of jobs, replaced by younger minimum-salary players, or be forced to take significant pay cuts. These dynamics are already at work in the National Football League, the only major sport that has a salary cap in place. Meanwhile, the management of the National Hockey League has signed on to this cost-cutting strategy, locking out players in what was projected to be a breakthrough season for broadening hockey's appeal.

Determined to remove all doubt about their intentions, baseball owners are publicly floating the idea of forming a scab league next spring. Under this scenario teams would open their spring training camps, inviting minor leaguers to participate and tempting major leaguers to break with the union and begin collecting fat paychecks once again.

Washington Balks on Antitrust

Meanwhile, baseball is returning to Washington. This fall, Congress sponsored hearings to consider revoking the owners' prized antitrust exemption. In 1922, the Supreme Court—in some of

its most far-fetched reasoning—declared that baseball was not subject to antitrust laws because the business of baseball did not constitute “trade or commerce in the commonly accepted use of the words.” Ever since, the people running a \$2-billion-a-year business have lived above the laws that purportedly regulate labor relations and financial operations in other industries.

While the House has taken the first tentative steps toward challenging the owners' prerogatives, action in the Senate has been stymied. This can be attributed in no small part to the owners' shrewd decision to name outgoing Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell as a top choice to fill the job of Commissioner of Baseball. Shortly after Mitchell signalled interest in the position, Democrats in the Senate put the antitrust issue on hold. Sen. Ted Kennedy, usually regarded as an ally of organized labor, cast a crucial vote in favor of the owners, preventing any further action within the Judiciary Committee.

With Mitchell's clout severely diminished in a Republican-controlled Senate, owners must reassess their strategy for dealing with Washington. It is not a given that a Republican Congress will automatically befriend the business of baseball. Geography may overrule ideology. Even a bedrock conservative such as Connie Mack (Rep.-Fla.), who never met a big business he didn't like, is resentful of baseball's failure to place an additional team in his home state. Consequently Mack and Republican legislators from baseball-deprived states are clamoring for an end to the antitrust exemption that gives baseball's 28 owners exclusive control of the game's expansion.

Other conservative leaders, including Henry Hyde (Rep.-Ill.), the incoming chair of the House Judiciary Committee, object to any congressional action that would give comfort to the union in baseball's labor wars.

In the topsy-turvy world of the sports business, lifelong liberals side with monopolies, while mouthpieces for big business stand by the workers. This same role reversal has been reflected in the press. On September 10, Dan Shaughnessy, a columnist for the liberal *Boston Globe*, branded the union's chief negotiator, Don Fehr, “totally irrational” (“When fan hopes heated up, the baseball people froze,” p. 61), while his colleague Will McDonough dismissed the players' proposal for revenue-sharing among teams by snidely asking, “Isn't it nice of the baseball players to tell the owners how to spend their money?” (“Marino called shot, then hit a home run,” p. 64). Mike Gefner, who covers baseball for the *Village Voice*, characterized the players as “real thugs” and compared them to “hostage-takers” (“Best Strikers Since Romario,” July 26, 1994, p. 141).

While prominent sportswriters defend the owners' interests, powerful newspapers like the *Washington Post* have been agitating against baseball's antitrust exemption. On September 16, the *Post* editorialized that “it really is time for Congress to consider doing away with baseball's antitrust exemption” (“Kiss It Goodbye”). Similarly, George Will called for the owners to abandon their quest for a salary cap and endorsed the players' strike.

So why is George Will writing nice things about the players? In part Will and his teammates at the *Wall Street Journal* are standing up for the market's right to run roughshod over the lives of working people everywhere. The players union is championing a so-called free-market system which is compatible with the

views of the business press. Baseball players, thanks to their unique and highly specialized skills, have some real bargaining power within the market. In the age of NAFTA, however, the vast majority of working people have no such edge. When even earning a salary is at risk, salary caps are a given.

Nevertheless, an analysis of the baseball strike defies a left/right breakdown. For most commentators, liberal as well as conservative, sports remain compartmentalized from the rest of life's experiences, existing in a hermetically sealed world apart from everyday political and economic concerns. Despite a sordid history steeped in segregation, the exclusion of women, and the exploitation of labor—in short, the story of American business—baseball is still viewed through a nostalgic haze which clouds the judgment of journalists.

While many business-oriented publications have cast the owners as the heavies, their new-found solidarity with labor goes only so far and is likely to be tested as the players consider a radical departure from business as usual.

A League of Their Own

Faced with an intransigent ownership, players are discussing forming a league of their own. Teams could be fielded in cities that have been denied access to franchises because of the owners' monopoly. In addition, many ballparks in current major league cities are municipally owned. By canceling the season, baseball's owners may be in violation of their leases, prompting cities to welcome paying tenants from a players' league.

There is historical precedent for such an enterprise. In 1890, ballplayers established the Players' League, an experimental league in which profits were shared between the players and their financial backers and workers made all the decisions, from choosing lineups to setting admission charges. Such a radical notion was unacceptable to the robber barons who ran 19th-century baseball, and the upstart league was crushed after a single season.

As baseball heads into a nuclear winter, there's a growing possibility that a players' league may rise from the ashes. Will the *Wall Street Journal* endorse a worker-run business? History provides the answer. You could look it up. •

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Greenspan Takes the Times for a Ride

Mark Weisbrot

Some articles just don't belong in the paper—the only value of the “news” reported is to promote a particular political agenda. From a purely informational standpoint, readers fortunate enough to have missed such articles are actually *better off*.

Such was the case June 9 when a *New York Times* article reported on the release of a Federal Reserve study. “New Fuel for the Fed's Rate Fire” announced the headline for the Business Section's lead article, while the subhead claimed: “Study Sees Benefits from Low Inflation” (Keith Bradsher, p. D1). The article was based on Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan's assertions that the central bank can actually increase productivity growth by lowering inflation. Unfortunately the study touted by both Greenspan and the *Times* does not support his argument. To the *Times*'s embarrassment, Greenspan admitted this in his Senate testimony shortly after the article appeared.

To be fair, Bradsher made a decent effort to show that other economists disagree with the purported link between low inflation and productivity growth. To this effect he quoted Laura D'Andrea Tyson, chair of President Clinton's Council of Economic Advisors, and Barry Bosworth of the Brookings Institution, who caused Greenspan to become noticeably irritated by commenting on the argument, “I think it's a bit of throwing everything at the fan and seeing what sticks.” But the basic theme of the article, that there is new evidence to justify the Fed's tight monetary policy, is terribly misleading. This false impression was reinforced by the prominent placement of the article, the headlines, and a sizeable graphic illustrating the correlation between inflation and productivity (which, as explained below, proves nothing). The real news was not the study, which was inconclusive at best, but the fact that Greenspan would attempt to advance such a flimsy argument for his increasingly unpopular monetary policy.

Tightening Takes Toll on Jobs and Wages

Some background to the debate will help illuminate what is at stake here. By June, the Federal Reserve had raised short-term interest rates five times since last February, ostensibly to prevent an increase in the rate of inflation. The latter was running at 2.4 percent, which is pretty low by historical standards, when the Fed began its tightening of monetary policy.

When the Fed raises short-term interest rates, it slows the growth of the economy by choking off business demand for investment, as well as demand for interest-sensitive household purchases such as homes and cars. Thus the first casualties in the war against inflation are those who are drafted into the reserve

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army of the unemployed as job growth slows. Much of the rest of the labor force is also affected adversely, as the higher unemployment reduces their ability to bargain for higher wages.

So the average household would be better off with, say, an extra percentage point of inflation and an additional million new jobs created. However, there is one group of people that would not trade one-tenth of a percentage point of inflation for ten million new jobs: the big bondholders. That is because inflation erodes the value of their bonds. It is their interests that are most served by the Fed's inflation paranoia.

The press generally recognizes that there is some trade-off between unemployment and inflation, but portrays the Fed as a neutral body that seeks to resolve this trade-off in the best interests of the general public. There is no conception that there may be a conflict of interest between the general public and the large bondholders.

The importance of this debate and the Fed's credibility on the issue is far from academic.

In 1991, 18 percent of the labor force working full time was earning too little to put them over the poverty line, up from 12.1 percent in 1978. A serious reversal of these trends would require much more than expansionary monetary policy: *e.g.*, labor law reform so that workers could organize unions, a restructuring of taxes and benefits, and a government commitment to full employment. Nonetheless, it is clear that even the most minimal measures to raise wages would cause at least some increase in the consumer price index; and so long as the Fed is committed to preventing this, and indeed would like to reduce inflation further, there is little hope for increasing the wages of low-paid workers or reducing poverty generally.

The "Natural Rate of Unemployment"

Similarly, the Fed accepts that the economy has a "natural rate of unemployment" of 6 percent to 6.5 percent. It believes that inflation will increase whenever unemployment falls below its "natural" rate, and they can therefore be expected to raise interest rates to prevent such an outcome. This means, for example, accepting a 12 percent to 13 percent unemployment rate for African Americans as a permanent condition of the economy.

Greenspan and others on the Fed have stated that they would like to reduce inflation to 1 percent or 2 percent. It is difficult to make a case for trying to wring inflation out of the economy through further increases in interest rates. Greenspan has advanced the argument that lowering the rate of inflation would actually increase productivity (output per worker) in the economy. If this were true, it would be the best argument yet put forward by the anti-inflation hawks.

However, this is a difficult case to make, and the Fed study that made such a splash in the *Times* didn't do it. It is not enough to show that low inflation and higher productivity growth are correlated, or even that lower inflation precedes increases in productivity. The paper did show this, but as everyone knows,



Alan Greenspan, right, primes Senate Banking Committee Chairman Donald Riegel, Jr.

the fact that night follows the day does not imply that day causes night. Both are caused by the earth's rotation. In the case of inflation and productivity, both are known to be affected by the business cycle.

When the economy goes into recession, productivity tends to decline because businesses reduce output but do not immediately lay off workers, to avoid the cost of replacing them. The period right before the onset of recession is likely to have higher-than-average inflation, because demand is higher before the recession starts. Thus we would expect that high inflation would precede lower productivity. Similarly, when the recovery from recession begins, productivity will rise. This rise in productivity will have been preceded by a period of lower inflation during the recession. So we would expect the business cycle to create this negative relationship between inflation and productivity.

When the authors of the Fed study adjusted for the influence of the business cycle, they found no causal relation between inflation and productivity. There were a number of other technical problems with the study, but in any case it was inconclusive.

Democratic Sen. Paul Sarbanes of Maryland, who has been critical of the Fed's recent rate increases, challenged Greenspan during the latter's July testimony to the Senate. He confronted the Fed chairman with an analysis of the Fed study and the relation between inflation and productivity generally written by Nobel Prize-winning economist James Tobin. Tobin's analysis demonstrated the inconclusiveness of the study and the weakness of the argument.

Under fire, Greenspan backed down. "My suspicion is that there is something there," he said, "but I cannot say to you at this particular time that I think it is scientifically proved, and having not been proved, *should not be a vehicle for monetary policy*" (emphasis added). So much for the "New Fuel for the Fed's Rate Fire"—the *Times* was left twisting in the wind. Maybe it will be a little more careful next time before jumping on Greenspan's rickety old bandwagon. ●

Aid to Israel

Jeffrey Blankfort

This August, as seems to be the case every summer when the Foreign Operations Appropriations bill comes before Congress, the Washington correspondents for the *New York Times* and other leading U.S. newspapers were busy with more pressing assignments. Only the *Financial Times* of London and the American Jewish community press reported that both the House and the Senate had overwhelmingly approved next year's foreign aid budget with its generous offerings to Israel and Egypt intact.

On August 10, safe from media scrutiny and any mobilized domestic opposition, the Senate approved the \$13.8-billion package by an 88-to-12 vote. In the previous week, the bill received the overwhelming support of the House. With the same lack of fanfare, the bill was signed into law by President Clinton on August 23.

As usual Israel and Egypt were the main beneficiaries, both of the funding—more than \$4 billion for Israel and \$2.1 billion for Egypt—and of the lack of reportage. The Palestinian “autonomy” in Gaza and Jericho was awarded \$80 million, with strings attached, but only the Israel lobby seemed concerned about that.

As has been its habit since 1985 (see *LOOT*, September 1992 and October 1993), the *New York Times* did not view the story as newsworthy. Neither did the *Los Angeles Times*, although it did report an earlier Senate vote on July 16. An Associated Press dispatch, run by the *San Francisco Chronicle* August 11, ignored the funding for Israel and Egypt and focused on the canceling of part of Jordan's debt to the U.S. “as a reward for making peace with Israel.”

Congress, acting on Clinton's initiative, and taking into account King Hussein's genuflections toward Israel, appropriated \$99 million for Jordan, specifically to be used for subtracting up to \$220 million from the \$700 million owed to the U.S. by the Hashemite regime. Only the *Financial Times* reported both the cutting of Jordan's debt and the funding for Israel and Egypt, which, it pointed out, represents “nearly 40 percent of the total U.S. aid budget” (George Graham, “Senate votes cash to cut Jordan debt,” August 11).

Beyond the Entitlements

As in the past, the bill contained benefits for Israel beyond what has come to be seen in Congress as its annual “entitlement” of \$3 billion (\$1.8 billion for weaponry and \$1.2 billion in economic aid), all of which Israel was to receive in cash not later than October 31.

These benefits include \$80 million for refugee resettlement—a perk that was inserted last year and appears to have become permanent—\$17 million for “development projects” that utilize Israeli expertise; “a total of \$200,000,000 for [military] stock-

piles ... for fiscal years 1994 and 1995,” which Israel is free to use in an emergency; and \$775 million from a seemingly innocuous amendment (Section 542) “of current law to permit the continued drawdown of United States defense equipment for another fiscal year,” which is not counted as part of the basic military appropriation.

This means that the \$700 million “drawdown” (Washington-speak for “giveaway”) of U.S. military equipment that President George Bush awarded in 1992 as a one-time payoff to Israel for staying out of the Gulf War has become a regular fixture in the foreign aid bill. This year, however, another \$75 million was added on.

The addition is the amount Israel needs to “pay” for the “first group of six F-16 fighter jets that the United States promised to Israel” and which had already arrived at an Israeli Air Force base before the vote (Jewish Telegraphic Agency, *Jewish Bulletin*, August 5). The McDonnell-Douglas jets were part of a total package of 50 F-16s that will be delivered in stages over the coming months. These jets, the *Bulletin* said, “were promised in appreciation for Israel's cooperation with the allied forces during the 1991 Persian Gulf War.” For sitting out the war, the thank-yous never stop.

The \$200 million appropriation for military stockpiles in Israel might be considered unusually high if one takes the administration's focus on the Middle East “peace process” seriously. What is curious is that despite the much-heralded “threat” of nuclear aggression from North Korea, Congress reduced the amount of military stockpiles that “may be available” in South Korea from \$189 million to \$40 million (the wording for stockpiles destined for Israel is “shall be available”).

Big Spender

Most Americans believe that the U.S. is the world's leading benefactor when it comes to “foreign aid.” The figures, however, tell a different story. According to an analysis contained in the Senate's report on the foreign aid bill (103-287), among so-called developed countries, the percentage of GNP donated abroad by the U.S. in 1993 (0.20) exceeds only that of Ireland (0.16). By contrast, the largest total givers, Japan's \$11.151 billion in assistance represented 0.30 percent of its GNP, France, \$8.27 billion (0.39); Germany, \$7.572 billion (0.39); Italy, \$4.122 billion (0.34); Britain, \$3.217 billion, (0.31); Sweden, \$2.46 billion (1.03); the Netherlands, \$2.753 billion (0.86); and our neighbor to the north, Canada, \$2.515 billion (0.46).

If the \$5.1 billion for Israel and Egypt (without the extras) were subtracted from the actual total of \$11.709 billion the U.S. disbursed in 1993, there would be \$6.6 billion left for the rest of the world. Using the Senate's statistics, that would mean a percentage of GNP of roughly 0.11 percent, bringing the United States' standing as a world-class benefactor to the very bottom of the Senate's list.

—Jeffrey Blankfort

Jeffrey Blankfort is editor of the *Middle East Labor Bulletin*. He lives in San Francisco.

Adding Up the Guarantees for a Strong Military

On August 11, the Senate approved by an 86-to-14 vote what is euphemistically referred to as the "defense" appropriations bill, a \$236.8 billion gift to the Pentagon and its corporate partners that included \$52.4 million for Israel's Arrow missile program and another \$15 million for the Arrow Deployability Initiative to pay for further testing of the weapons system.

The General Accounting Office estimates that the U.S. will have paid \$483 million out of a total of \$517 million between 1988 and 1995 toward completion of the Arrow missile system. In addition, a minimum of \$232 million more will be required through 1999 for a missile that U.S. forces are not expected to use ("The Arrow Missile: The United States, Israel and Strategic Cooperation," *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 48/3, pp. 475-91).

Also in the spending bill are \$26 million for Israel's *Have Nap* missile, which can be "fired from B-52 bombers to hit heavily defended targets," and \$15 million toward a joint U.S.-Israeli cooperation on the Boost Phase Intercept program (*Near East Report*, August 22).

When one adds the foreign aid and military appropriations to the second installment of \$2 billion in U.S.-sponsored loan guarantees that will become available to Israel for the next fiscal year, it brings the total U.S. package of grants and loans to Israel for 1995 to \$6.180 billion.

In its initial vote in June, the House passed the aid bill by its "widest margin ever," 337 to 87 (*Near East Report*, June 6). It also marked the first time all the voting members of the Congressional Black Caucus gave it their support. Texas Republican Henry Bonilla was the only member of the Latino Caucus to oppose the bill.

Defying the Trend in Reductions

House Appropriations Committee Chair David Obey (Dem.-Wis.) was very proud that he was able to cut the total foreign aid appropriations \$390 million below the president's request and \$700 million below last year's level.

School Ties

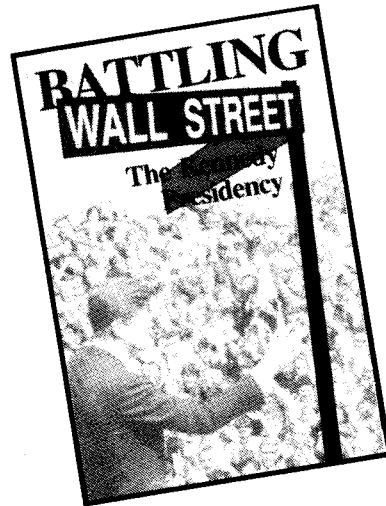
A relatively small item in the foreign aid budget Congress approved for 1995 is worthy of special note. The Senate, on June 16, expressed alarm at "reports that graduates of the School of Americas (SOA) have engaged in some of the hemisphere's worst human rights atrocities." While detailing the graduates' activities in El Salvador, including the murder of six Jesuit priests, the El Mozote massacre, and the rape and murder of four American churchwomen, the Senate report did not mention the training of Haiti's Raoul Cédras or Panama's Manuel Noriega. Despite this evidence, the Senate and the House joined together to raise the school's appropriation from \$21.25 million to \$26.35 million! The school, originally located in Panama, was relocated to Fort Benning, Georgia, following the U.S. treaty with Panama.

—Jeffrey Blankfort

"This bill continues the trend in the reduction of foreign aid which we have seen since 1985," said Obey. "This bill is 24 percent lower than it was in 1985. I would wager there is not one percent of Americans who know that" (*Near East Report*, June 6). It is safe to say that, thanks to Israel's friends in the media, less than one percent know how much Israel is receiving or how secure its appropriation remains. •

JUST PUBLISHED:

A New and Iconoclastic Look At JFK's Presidency



Battling Wall Street: The Kennedy Presidency By Donald Gibson

More than thirty years after the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, the meaning and the legacy of his presidency are as much the subject of controversy as are the facts of his murder.

For the first time, the conventional wisdom—that Kennedy was a cautious, even a conservative president, a "Tory Democrat"—is soundly challenged. In this intriguing and penetrating analysis, which includes an iconoclastic critique of the environmental movement, Don Gibson looks not at the standard commentaries on JFK's Thousand Days, but analyzes what Kennedy said and wrote and did, contrasting that with the words and actions of his enemies—the *Wall Street Journal*, *Fortune* magazine, and the corporate and banking magnates themselves, who, as this book demonstrates, truly despised the president.

Notes, bibliography, index; 210 pp.

Hardcover: \$24.95; Paperback: \$16.95; plus shipping.

(To order, use the form on page 23.)

Peter Rothberg

Politeracy

A Sordid Century

I am encouraged by your remarks on the need for respecting and advancing the cause of freedom in this troubled world and I sincerely thank you for your assurances that you and the Haitian people are with us in this endeavour. This teamwork demonstrates the vitality of freedom loving peoples.

Though evocative of Jimmy Carter's high-minded praise of Raoul Cédras upon completion of his brokered "peace accord" in Haiti, the foregoing remarks were actually penned by Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1958 in response to a letter from then Haitian dictator François Duvalier, a spiritual forefather of Cédras. Taking Ike's comments together with Carter's generous lavishings on Cédras 36 years later, it's clear little has fundamentally changed in U.S. foreign policy in this hemisphere.

Haiti is a striking case in point, but other examples abound. Ronald Fernandez's new book, *Cruising the Caribbean: U.S. Influence and Intervention in the Twentieth Century*, exhaustively details many of them. Covering the sordid duplicity that makes up much of the history of U.S. relations with its hemispheric neighbors, Fernandez looks at U.S. attempts to shape the economic, political, and cultural lives of places like Puerto Rico, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Haiti.

The result of these machinations was the same everywhere: U.S.-friendly governments and the development of indigenous *comprador* classes who worked with U.S. capital in channeling their country's resources—both material and human—into the coffers of multinationals. This reality has left the myriad parts of the Caribbean in the same basic hole: an unyielding poverty engulfing the lives of whole generations of people. As a classified memo, attributed to the Nixon White House and dated January 5, 1973, put it in regard to a favorite destination of U.S. tourists:

The Virgin Islands are ghettos in the sun. Only worse. They don't even have the grey areas and buffer zones of U.S. central cities. They are black

(largely poor) and white (largely tourists—spending, spending, spending). So the situation is explosively bad and getting worse.

A look at memos never meant for our eyes helps expose official rhetoric (that capitalist development will pull the Third World out of poverty) for what it really is—propaganda for domestic consumption. Such remarks also show that politicians and policy-planners are all too aware of the social consequences of their work.

Although Fernandez brings nothing particularly original to his re-telling of events, *Cruising the Caribbean* is a succinct, well-documented handbook for understanding the context of U.S.-Caribbean relations.

• *Cruising the Caribbean: U.S. Influence and Intervention in the Twentieth Century*; Common Courage Press, P.O. Box 702, Monroe, ME 04951; \$16.95.

Living Media

With windows of opportunity scarce, progressive activists can't afford to miss the rare opening to preach beyond the converted. This was the driving force behind the creation of Living Media, Peter Wirth, the organization's founder, explained to *LOOT*. Designed to train activists traveling to the Third World to engage the mainstream media, Living Media offers a range of consultative services to grassroots groups looking to become more media-savvy.

As Wirth explained, the idea for Living Media came out of his own experiences organizing, promoting, and publicizing Central America solidarity trips throughout the 1980s. In his view, many activists foreclosed the possibilities of favorable local press coverage through a kind of defeatist self-marginalization ("Why bother? They won't cover our trip and even if they do they'll distort it anyway").

Wirth argues that, despite institutional constraints, there is room in the regional press for some alternative perspectives, particularly when they come from locals returning from Third World trips. Contending that the mass media are less monolithic than many progressives believe, he has prepared a 60-minute audiotape on how to find and take advantage of the fissures in the media. The tape explains, among other things, how to position a solidarity trip as newsworthy; how to identify appropriate media outlets for particular stories; how to write press releases; and how to pitch stories to editors and writers.

• Living Media, 702 South Beech St., Syracuse, NY 13210; 315-476-3396; \$9.99 for one tape plus \$1.50 postage and handling; call or write for bulk discounts and other information.

Postscript

In this final column, I would like to thank those who have sent suggestions and who, through their correspondence, have made this column possible.

I would also like to remind readers of some of the vital outlets actively promoting alternative views.

Regular "Politeracy" readers will be familiar with these publishing houses—all of which evidence a healthy leftwing bent:

- Common Courage Press, P.O. Box 702, Monroe, ME 04951.
- South End Press, 116 Botolph St., Boston, MA 02115.
- Verso Press, 29 W. 35th St., New York, NY 10001.

These general-interest magazines provide counterpoints to the pablum in the likes of *Time* and *Newsweek*:

- *The Nation*, P.O. Box 10763, Des Moines, IA 50340; \$48.
- *The Progressive*, P.O. Box 421, Mount Morris, IL 61054; \$30.
- *Z*, 18 Millfield St., Woods Hole, MA 02543; \$28.

High-quality newsletters on a range of topics are abundant. A few of the best:

- *Counterpunch*, 1601 Connecticut Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20009; \$40.
- *Labor Notes*, 7453 Michigan Ave., Detroit, MI 48210; \$10.
- *Left Business Observer*, 250 W. 25th St., New York, NY 10001; \$20.
- *Northern Ireland Report*, P.O. Box 9086, Lowell, MA 01853; \$20.
- *PR Watch*, 3318 Gregory St., Madison, WI 53711; \$60.
- *Prisoners Legal News*, P.O. Box 1684, Lake Worth, FL 33460; \$25.

Finally, four fine focused publications:

- *Extra!* 130 W. 25th St., New York, NY 10001; \$30.
- *Index on Censorship*, Virgin Mailing, 10 Camptown Rd., Irvington, NJ 07111; \$35.
- *Transition*, Oxford University Press, 2001 Evans Rd., Cary, NC 27513; \$19.95.
- *The Workbook*, c/o SRIC, P.O. Box 4524, Albuquerque, NM 87106; \$8.50.

Short Takes

El Salvador

An unbylined article in the *New York Times* September 11 demonstrated the mainstream media's difficulty in covering post-dictatorship Latin America. "El Salvador Struggles to Impose Justice" (p. A12), ostensibly a progress report on efforts to reform the country's judicial system, went on to describe how groups previously engaged in a particularly brutal type of political work were now more concerned with everyday entrepreneurial activities such as drug-smuggling and bribery in a country where, according to the July 1994 United Nations Human Rights Report, common acts of violence had risen 300 percent between January and September 1993 (p. 9).

"More troubling," as the *Times* put it under the subhead "Death Squads Transformed," "is emerging evidence that death squads, which killed thousands of leftists and moderates with impunity during the war, have transformed themselves into criminal bands that are also working against reform."

In earlier times, discerning readers of the *Times* may have read on an inside page about the activities of these newly formed "criminal bands" in their previous incarnation as agents of a U.S.-supported state. According to Americas Watch and other human rights groups, an estimated 45,000 people were killed by these organizations during the 1980s.

And now, it seems, the murderers are taking up crime to pay their bills!

The article reflects that the mainstream media, which long bought into the official line that it was necessary to support juntas in Latin America to counter the "threat of communism," are now facing difficulties reporting the activities of those governments during the 1980s.

It is no longer possible to deny or minimize the scale of the atrocities committed by the juntas and their death squads, now that the elected governments of these countries—for all their many faults—are releasing information documenting the existence and government connections of these groups. Yet the media cannot admit that the security apparatus in all these Central American states was nothing less than criminal. That would imply that the U.S. spent

billions of dollars helping criminals cling to power. Thus, while conceding such actions occurred, the media shy away from labelling them criminal.

The linguistic acrobatics required to do so also obscure another significant fact: The death squads have not given up their more traditional work.

In the run-up to the March elections, killers thought to be working for the governing ARENA Party executed several Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front activists, leaving behind the initials of known death squads, frequently carved into the bodies of the victims. Americas Watch's March 1994 report on El Salvador, "Darkening Horizons: Human Rights on the Eve of the March 1994 Elections," details 15 death-squad-style murders of FMLN activists in the last months of 1993 and the start of 1994.

Perhaps crime was slow those months, and the assassins felt like making money in a more legitimate manner—killing—for a more legitimate employer—the party of government.

—Sasha Abramsky

Daniel Patrick Malthus

An example of turning history upside down can be found in a report on the Democratic primary campaign of the Rev. Al Sharpton against incumbent Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan, a sacred monster of the *New York Times*. Francis X. Clines reported on September 3:

Mr. Sharpton talks passionately of bearding Mr. Moynihan on behalf of all blacks and sympathizers ever rankled by some of the Senator's oft misunderstood but never forgotten allusions to "benign neglect" of the race issue in the Nixon years and, lately, "speciation," or formalization of out-of-wedlock social problems ("One Step at a Time, Sharpton Broadens Political Following," p. 1).

It is Clines who misunderstood. Moynihan did not *allude* to "benign neglect"; he *recommended* it in a secret memo that foreshadowed Nixon's Southern Strategy, a counterattack on the gains for civil rights and social justice in the preceding years.

Moynihan's recent suggestion that out-of-wedlock pregnancies might produce a new biological species did not refer to formalizing social problems, it merely spelled out the racist, genetic Malthusianism that

Moynihan has been preaching, usually more allusively, for 30 years.

—John L. Hess

Trouble in Paradise

On September 5, the *New York Times* ran a pair of devastating letters on Russia's economic and social breakdown that described the extravagances of the nouveaux riches, the failure to pay wages, massive corruption, and the collapse of the social safety net (Paul T. Christensen, "In Ex-Workers' Paradise, It's a Bleak Labor Day"; Catherine Cosman, "Safety Net Mess").

The paper finessed this by its large headline's reference to "Ex-Workers' Paradise," which refocuses readers' attention to the claims of a workers' paradise that wasn't under the Communist Party, and away from the new Western-sponsored "market-economy paradise" that is making the prior non-paradise look relatively good.

—Edward S. Herman

Put Those Commercial Interests Aside!

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher is a really bold fellow. His only Op Ed column in the *New York Times* thus far was a defense of a hardline stance against Saddam Hussein ("Wobbly on Iraq," April 29, 1994), which took a lot of guts on his part, given Saddam's popularity here.

In July, Christopher testified before Congress against any appeasement of Iranian terrorism: He is very strong against terrorism by "international outlaws" (FRAPH in Haiti is not in the category of "international outlaw"; it is merely local terrorists in U.S. service, thus no problem for Christopher.) He even described himself as "absolutely mystified why these countries [Germany and Japan] are unwilling to put their commercial interests aside and recognize that this kind of terrorism must be dealt with and dealt with very harshly" ("Allies accused by US of appeasing Iran," *Financial Times*, July 29, 1994, p. 4).

But perhaps Germany and Japan were just following the model used by the U.S. to deal with human rights in China and Indonesia, which are, after all, awfully big commercial markets, and large and sensitive countries that require much patience and quiet diplomacy.

—Edward S. Herman

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FIVE YEARS OF LIES OF OUR TIMES

January 1990 (available in photocopy only): Panama Canal; Chomsky and Cockburn on A.M. Rosenthal; Herman on El Salvador; class war in Colombia; Chile; AIDS; pro-choice; secret report on PanAm Flight 103.

February 1990: Nicaragua election violence and ceasefire; Chomsky on Panama invasion; Noriega, Torrijos, and the CIA; "Days of Rage" affair; spin on South Africa; U.S. bases in Philippines; Chile; Cuba; Krassner on JFK and Jim Garrison.

March 1990: Panama and the polls; Chomsky on Thailand; Gruson and Kinzer re-examined; torture in El Salvador; Guatemala; Colombia; Mandela's release; body count in Romania; Lipmann and Merz on U.S.S.R.; S&Ls and junk bonds; swindling the homeless; who killed Martin Luther King, Jr.

April 1990: Chomsky and Herman on Nicaragua elections; Irish terrorism; Worthy on Boston's Stuart case; Greyhound strike; Britain's poll tax; Preston on self-determination; *Times* on Cambodia; TV Martí; demonizing Noriega.

May 1990: El Salvador; the ANC; Ralph Lauren; South Africa; Chomsky on Israel and nuclear weapons; black journalists; Argentina; Nelson Mandela; Parenti on TV talk shows; the Casolo case; the Green Berets; heterosexist bias.

June 1990: The environment; Eastern Europe; ABC *Nightline*; the peace dividend; George Seldes; the *Cosmo* Woman; Lebanon; Yasir Arafat; Paul Lewis and UNESCO.

July 1990: East European report: German reunification, Herrhausen and Deutsche Bank, Lithuania, Bulgaria, the Cold War and the Nazis; Chomsky on Central America; Cockburn on Kent State and Jackson State.

August 1990: Brenneke trial; anti-Arab bias; Chomsky on the PLO; Zaire; lies on Indonesia; Guatemala sources; GE testing.

September 1990: Attacking youth, the poor, and minorities; Rohatyn's "miracle"; Parenti on Eastern media; Schiller on polls and freedom; selling free trade; Herman on regulatory breakdown; Iraq and U.S. Gulf policy; Kodak's pollution; AZT-cancer connection.

October 1990: Ireland, British human rights abuses, and the Doherty case; Kuwait; Chomsky on the new U.N.; oil markets; Afghanistan; David Duke's rise; the JFK assassination; violence against women; covering Nazis; Carlos, Posada, and Bosch.

November 1990: El Salvador revisited; Chomsky on Moynihan's "progress" at the U.N.; "diplomacy" in the Gulf; campaign against Cuba; Romania and Argentina; Mohawk struggle in Canada; age discrimination; Cockburn remembers Watts; Israel's secret war plans.

December 1990: Culture, politics, and the *New York Times*; pesticides; Panama casualties; the Korean War; Kuwait; the JFK assassination; Parenti on the entertainment corporations; children's TV; cumulative 1990 index.

January 1991: Afrocentrism's foes; Wil-

liam Bennett's legacy; black journalists; Israel and Palestinians; Tanzania; Timor; Chomsky on El Salvador; Thatcher's "vision"; Puerto Rico; Hungary; disposable diapers; Zoom Black Magic Liberation Radio.

February 1991: In the Gulf: the media war, CNN examined, disinformation, the environmental disaster, Arabophobia, lesson from Ike; Schiller and Chomsky on the New World Order; elections in Haiti and Canada; biological warfare; Leslie Gelb.

March 1991: Civilian casualties in Iraq; "smart" bombs and ABM treaties; more disinformation; Vietnam parallels; destruction in Panama and Iraq; oil spills; elections in the U.S., Pakistan, Brazil, and the Philippines.

April 1991: Casualties of war; "non-political" propaganda; the peace ship; Goulart's fate; miscoverage of Cuba then and now; elections in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Bulgaria; Koning on the Quincentenary; Cockburn on POWs.

May 1991: Cheney's war record; GATT propaganda; Mitsotakis's "mandate" in Greece; Iraq, Kuwait, and the Kurds; Chomsky on Mideast peace plan; Reagan's military boom; Christian on Chile; promoting NED; embarrassing David Dinkins.

June 1991: PR for the LAPD; Angolan peace process; CIA budget "compromise"; Sa-fire on Iraqi Kurds; Greyhound strike; School of the Americas; obstructing peace in Cambodia; Gypsy children; TV Martí; Operation Gladio; the Mujahidin; CUNY takeover.

July-August 1991: Death and disease in the Gulf; images of Iraqi victims; Eqbal Ahmad on the U.S. media; Prescott Bush in China; Palestinian "flexibility"; Guatemala's Gramajo; exploiting urban woes; AIDS controversy; Canada's NDP; Poland.

September 1991: Schiller, Oglesby, and Sklar on the pre-release attacks on JFK; Chomsky on Iraqi sanctions; camcorder advocates talk back; rape coverage; serial murders of prostitutes in San Diego; homophobia and the Dahmer case; Chile's "miracle"; free-market reforms.

October 1991: Audubon Ballroom; Crown Heights "balance"; Inkatha and the *Times*; Chomsky on U.S. foreign policy goals; Herman on "experts"; buried alive in Iraq; the environmental president; Koning on Yugoslav nationalists.

November 1991: Thomas vs. Hill; Casolaro case; Haiti; Angola; Chomsky on media omissions; debt in Brazil; Bulgarian Connection; Teamsters; the Lakotas; Reagan in a fog.

December 1991: BCCI and First American Bankshares; BCCI and CIA; Haiti's aborted democracy; Ollie North's book tour; Mideast peace talks in Madrid; satanic cults; Pentagon and high-tech research; rightwing Nobelists; war damage in Kuwait; Noriega and drugs; cumulative 1991 index.

January-February 1992: Bush in Japan; Robert Maxwell; looting former U.S.S.R.; Native Americans protest Rose Bowl Parade;

Nicaragua's new regime; Chomsky on PanAm bombing; *Times* union busting; safe-sex censorship; Latin American "miracle"; fine-tuning U.S. economy; Schiller on JFK.

March 1992: Gulf War one year later; Iraq's invisible victims; Israeli bombing of Lebanon; Palestinian suffering; peace rallies for Cuba; LeMoyné on El Salvador; Japan-bashing; U.S.-Mexico border patrols; sexism at the *Times*; Libya and PanAm Flight 103.

April 1992: Prescott Bush and organized crime; L.A. *Times* defines feminism; Wuornos trial; Cerro Maravilla case reopened; silicone breast implants; International Women's Day; political cartoons of 1991; Philippine elections.

May 1992: Pro-choice demonstrations; California welfare "reform"; hip-hop culture; Israeli prison torture; Arabs in political cartoons; Jerry Brown campaign; Venezuela coup attempt; Chomsky on *Times* book reviews; Noriega verdict.

June 1992: Haiti policy; Kenya repression; L.A. uprising; urban poverty programs; Operation Rescue in Buffalo; Iran-Contra scoop suppressed; desecrating cemeteries; AIDS theories; Rio Earth Summit; U.S. and U.N. dues; Solarz's bank account.

July-August 1992: Apartheid's last gasp?; the "new" dissent; Madrid peace talks; U.S. extradition double standard; Shirley Christian's Panama; assault on environmental regulations; California primary; Parenti on the Klan; Earth Summit; Canada's non-news and health-care critics; "framing" Guatemala.

September 1992: Hollywood politics; commercials in the classroom; U.S.S. *Vincennes* attack revisited; Columbus Day Four; Polish nationalist laid to rest; pesticide ban; promoting NAFTA; aid to Israel; Temple Mount massacre; Chomsky on murdering history; Mandela's message; UNITA rampage; Jesse Jackson at the convention.

October 1992: Rabin returns; recycling Arafat image; Rather and Jennings on Israel; Israeli nukes; Mideast peace talks; Bush aid to Iraqi nuclear program; Anthony Lewis rewrites history; "Year of the Woman"; Peru coup; marketing L.A. gang culture; Castro at Ibero-American Summit.

November 1992: Black Mountain land dispute; Inslaw affair; Chomsky on the clandestine state; Gulf War videos; DWEM history of creation; Lordstown autoworker strike; L.A. *Times* on NAFTA; Angola election; Jim Garrison obits; Operation Mongoose; Solarz defeated; "USA Decay."

December 1992: Nobelist Rigoberta Menchú Tum; "clean air" in NYC; *Times* pampers diaper manufacturers; Schiller on North Korea "threat"; trade war: U.S. vs. EC; Mexico elections; "stolen" artifacts and the Met; Israel's death squads; L.A. *Times* covers Quincentenary; breast cancer; cumulative 1992 index.

January-February 1993: Israel deportations; Haiti embargo; dangers of dioxin; Alger Hiss case; Soviet intelligence files; invasion of Somalia; 1948 Arab invasion of Israel; red-

baiting Johnetta Cole.

March-April 1993: Haitian refugees at Guantánamo; history of bomb-makers; Nubar Hovsepian on Islamic fundamentalism; Islamic "menace"; October Surprise report; Russian democracy; rescuing Jonas Savimbi; Mozambique contras; "good" and "bad" Kurds; U.S. role at the U.N.

May 1993: Salvador Truth Commission; attacks on *Liberators*; World Trade Center bombing suspects; Howard Zinn on John Silber; "new" journalism in East Europe; Bertolt Brecht's Berliner Ensemble; South Africa bloodshed; U.S. bombs Iraq again; patronage and poverty in Mexico.

June 1993: Raymond Bonner vindicated; POW/MIA lobby; Vietnam POW document hoax; toxic waste cleanup; impunity in Guatemala; U.S. Angola policy; vanishing Palestinian deportees; Schiller looks at fashion; Uruguay's economic "progress"; "worst" terrorist act; women "scream," men reason.

July-August 1993: Pedestrians fight back; health-care battle; army spying on African Americans; Edward Asner talks about media and Hollywood; Cuba storm devastation; Kunstler on Kahane case and WTC bombing; deconstructionists and Holocaust deniers; ADL's spy list.

September 1993: Earth First! bombing; Chomsky on human rights; A.M. Rosenthal vs.

Ralph Nader; Edward Said talks about the culture war against Islam; NASA assaults on ozone layer.

October 1993: Blaming Sandinistas again; Israel's aggression in Lebanon; aid for Israel; Pérez in Venezuela; Haiti; *Times* ad campaign for NAFTA; Guildford Four; striking for Cuba.

November 1993: Raiding the redwoods; Clinton forest plan; tyranny in Indonesia; Southern Africa; "ethnic Turks"; behind the 1980s arms buildup; breast cancer and environmental risks.

December 1993: Coup in Russia; "Democrat" Yeltsin; Aristide betrayed; Bruce Franklin punctures POW-MIA myths; China apologia; Middle East peace agreement; cumulative 1993 index.

January-February 1994: Bell Atlantic-TCI merger corners the information market; Nasar on NAFTA; free marketeers win again; truth about Ireland; French's Haiti coverage; Parenti on Russia; Barnes Foundation controversy; nuclear reporting; 30th anniversary of JFK assassination.

March 1994: Opening the files on Honduras and El Salvador; paying for Venezuela's economic "miracle"?; Chomsky on New World discipline; Clinton's "compromises" on forests; free markets and free trade; Koning on Katherine Ann Power and the dangerous '60s; balancing experts on Angola; letter from Moscow.

April 1994: Herman on "forgiving" Vietnam; Bob Parry tells how the media played it safe on Walsh Report; untold story of nuclear and chemical experiments; Carole Gallagher remembers the "downwinders"; Rabin and the settlers; the Reichstag Fire revisited; Parenti hits the pro-Warren Commission chorus.

May 1994: missing the story in Chiapas; drowning in Whitewater; Hebron's silent victims; Chris Simpson on the Nazi-Dulles connection; Buthelezi boosters; Namibia's final step to freedom; dioxin critic fights libel suit; hyping economic recovery; making PBS accountable in Pittsburgh; racial "progress" in Mississippi.

June 1994: playing the polls on health-care reform; media's false parallels on Whitewater and Iran-contra; labor-management relations; El Salvador election abuses; remembering Grenada; business first in Indonesia; covering for Kahane.

July-August 1994: women in South Africa; anti-anti-nuclear forces; Chomsky on labor; coverage of radiation poisoning; Paddy Moynihan, Gerry Adams, and James Jesus Angleton; Herman on Shahak.

September-December 1994: coverage of Cuba and Más Canosa; labor and elections in Mexico; foreign aid to Israel; Greenspan and the Fed; taking sides in the baseball strike; cumulative 1994 index.

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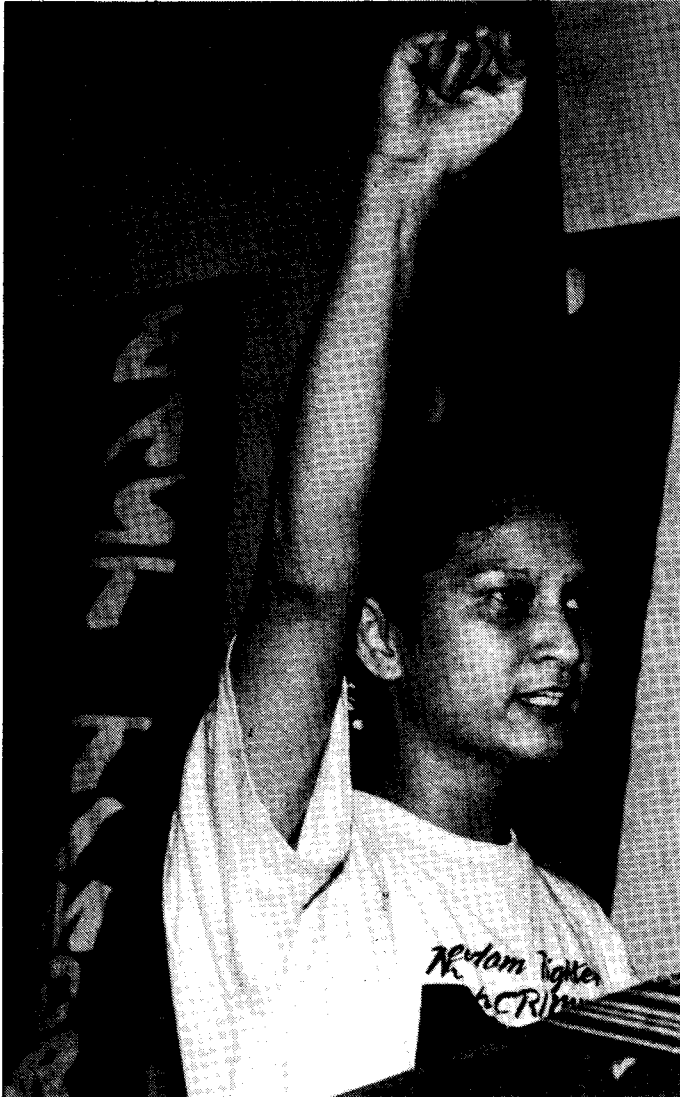
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East Timorese activist Ines Almelda addresses Asia-Pacific Conference in Manila June 2, 1994, defying the Philippine government's ban on foreigners participating in the meeting.

Forgetting Timor

Alexander George

In some ways, Andrew Pollack's November 28 report on East Timor represents an improvement in *New York Times* coverage of that dirty story ("Timorese Worry World Will Now Forget Them," p. A8). The article—datelined "DILI, East Timor," and not "DILI, Indonesia" as all previous *Times* reports have been—gave due weight to some of the suffering of the East Timorese at the hands of the Indonesians and treated official statements with skepticism.

But errors and a failure to provide an appropriate historical context continue to plague the coverage. Thus, East Timor was still referred to as "the former Portuguese colony," even though mention was made of the fact that "the United Nations still recognizes Portugal as having jurisdiction." (Perhaps Pollack was taking his cue from the United States which, as he reported, does not contest the forced integration of East Timor into Indonesia.) Pollack perpetuated the myth that Indonesia invaded the territory in 1975 to intervene in a civil war, when in fact the civil war had ended months before.

Pollack nowhere mentioned that within five years after the invasion up to 200,000 Timorese (close to one-third of the pre-invasion population) had died of starvation, been killed by bombings, or been massacred outright. Finally, Pollack omitted all information about the substantial military, financial, and diplomatic support provided by the West—and the U.S. in particular—for Indonesia's brutal subjugation of the East Timorese.

The *Times* has failed over the years to cover either the full facts or our country's dishonorable role. During the worst of the atrocities, the paper remained virtually silent (see Noam Chomsky and Edward S. Herman, *The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism* [Boston: South End Press, 1979], sect. 3.4.4). It is with good reason then that the Timorese fear the "world will now forget them." •

Lies Of Our Times

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